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World Decade
for Cultural Development

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UNESCO

Executive Board considers Decade

The 135th session of the Unesco Executive Board met in Paris from October 8–25, 1990.

During the session, the Board reviewed the Report of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Decade, adopted a comprehensive decision on the Decade, and also listened to an address by the Committée's Chairman, Mr Adriaan van der Staay. The text of Mr. van der Staay's remarks, as well as the Board's decison, are reprinted below.

Address of the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee for the World Decade for Cultural Development, to the 135th Session of the Executive Committee of Unesco (October 16, 1990)

The World Decade for Cultural Development has a name as impressive as its ambitions, but only a short history. And what is even more important, it can by its nature only have a short future. The midterm review is planned to take place not later than 1993. Incredibly soon the World Decade itself will already be history. You will understand that the Intergovernmental Committee is fully aware of the pressure of time in achieving something of value. Urgency is our first consideration.

Quality is another keyword. The World Decade is meant to strengthen the cultural dimension of development. Since the MONDIACULT conference of 1982 this has come to mean that we are aware of the fact that the quality of life cannot be defined by economic growth alone. This quality-enhancing role is central to the World Decade. As Unesco is the lead agency for the World Decade, this responsibility is ours. If we combine high quality and urgency as our two parameters, this organization is expected to make a series of extraordinary efforts. You set up an Intergovernmental Committee to stimulate, follow and evaluate the history of this extraordinary effort. The Intergovernmental Committee is a small wheel, that should turn in harmony with the bigger wheels of Unesco and the United Nations. Together we are engaged in making these wheels produce, like a waterwheel driven by a stubborn animal produces lifegiving water, a better quality of life for all.

It is a great opportunity that Unesco has to do this in cooperation with other agencies. The quality of life cannot be compartmentalized. The same problems, poverty, ignorance and overpopulation that help to destroy the quality of the environment, degrade the quality of life. Safeguarding nature and culture: the same struggle from the point of view of the quality of life. The building of the future and the protection of the past is the same struggle.

Problems can only be solved if we see them as interdependent. So there is a firm intellectual basis for looking at the United Nations System as a whole and asking ourselves, what we can do together to enhance the quality of life.

I suppose nothing in what I said is new and most of what I said is self-

(Continued on page 8)

Houses of Culture in Denmark: the struggle for cultural autonomy

Recently the Decade has been featured in a public awareness campaign aimed at the Danish public. As one element of this effort, the Decade Committee in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment, in Denmark responsible for the protection and preservation of historical buildings, has published a book about Danish 'Houses of Culture'. Lisbeth Gundlund Jensen tells us more.

In Denmark, it is a highly valued tradition that popular movements struggle for cultural autonomy.

In recent Danish history, it all started in the second half of the XIXth century, at a time when peasant movements were striving to create for themselves a democratic identity and self-consciousness. To this end, they found themselves in opposition to the clergy which claimed not only to be the sole arbitrator of religious matters, but also controlled the educational system. The peasant movements, in turn, found themselves obliged to reject the imposed standards of 'good taste' in literature, theatre, etc., and in several other ways struggle with the semi-feudal hierarchic social order in which these same peasants constituted the very bottom rung.

In the decade before the turn of the century the peasant movements, in cooperation with radical bourgeois circles in the capital, positioned themselves to occupy an important place in the forging of Danish democracy. In this process, the Danish folk high schools played an important role in the creation of new cultural standards. During the same period and with some of the same purposes, village halls were constructed everywhere in the countryside.

All this changed the concepts of learning and education, of arts, ethics, and religion. Finally, members of the peasant movements took their seats in the Danish Parliament. Contemporary cartoonists caricatured them as rough and ridiculous people, without culture and wearing large smelly boots, etc. But this was, in fact, exactly what they were *not*. Indeed, they were simply the products of a new and different culture, who esteemed the value of their own standards.

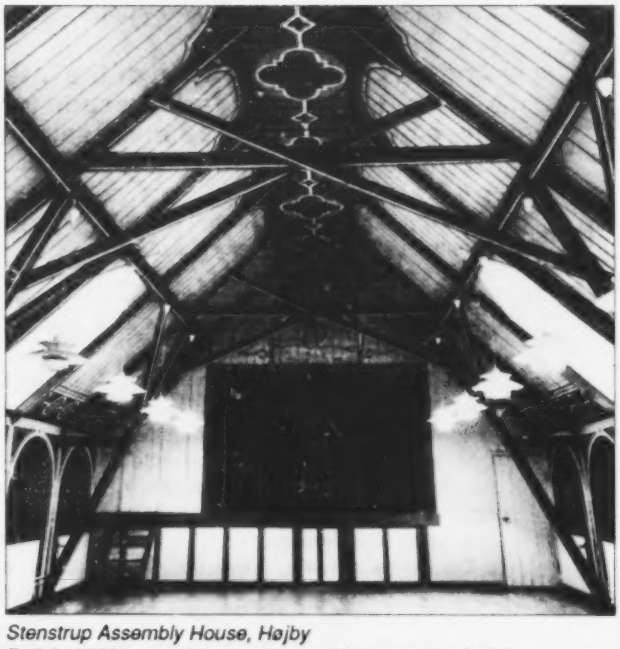

Photo: Henning Skov

Stenstrup Assembly House, Højby
Built in 1889 as a training and assembly-house, the building was protected in 1980 and re-established as an assembly room and theatre.

Danish Houses of Culture

The book *Danish Houses of Culture*, shows some of the most beautiful buildings, worthy of preservation, created in the period of the peasant movements' 'cultural rearmament' in the last century. These same buildings are still used for cultural purposes.

Within a short while, it also became important to the workers movement in the big cities to get buildings of their own, for they knew they could not rely on the generosity of private owners to furnish them with meeting rooms. These houses have provided shelter for unions or political parties related to the workers movement, and in recent times they have also served as meeting places for other popular purposes. One of the oldest houses of this kind has now been converted into a workers museum, which in this way takes advantage of the authenticity of the old building.

In the late nineteen-sixties, the youth movement once again ushered in a new wave of democratization of culture, a new fight for cultural autonomy, and consequently, of course, a demand for new houses of culture in Denmark. This resulted in the mushrooming of local culture houses in the cities, generally based on a very broad concept of democracy and entailing grassroot-initiatives.

Yet these houses are not always quite large enough — for example, to satisfy the demands of the pop music culture. The struggle for better and larger places has sometimes been hard. A few years ago the mayor of Copenhagen decided to close a popular music hall which presented rock music and experimental theatre, in order to erect a fancy donated planetarium named after the famous Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe, on this very central and beautiful spot in the town. The protests were loud and bitter — the various groups (and their fans!) didn't want to leave the central part of Copenhagen. And after all was said and done, the Danish tradition of giving priority to popular culture triumphed. Today an old restored industrial building in the very heart of Copenhagen provides the same milieu and music culture, with even bigger and better facilities.

Industrial architecture worthy of preservation

The book also dwells on the tendency which emerged during the last decade, to recognize industrial buildings as part of our architectural cultural heritage and as such, worthy of preservation and protection. And it focuses on the fact that these buildings — with their strong and open architectural construction, their pillar-less expansiveness, and their simple and unpretentious architectural style — often fit the purpose and demands of larger cultural initiatives. Besides this, the financial resources required for this kind of 'cultural metamorphosis' are often far more modest than the means required to construct a new building.

In Aarhus, the rock music culture also succeeded in getting its own place. This is an old restored building with some of the important qualities of an industrial structure, in a style different from the fancy concert hall: an old riding-house used by the cavalry in the last century. This building was made a protected site in 1979 and is now used for rock concerts.

In Odense — the third largest city in Denmark — a broad local popular movement succeeded in preventing the demolition of a large group of industrial buildings that formed a woolmill, in service from the XIXth century until the last production ceased in the 1970's. Today one of the biggest attractions of Odense, the whole area was rebuilt in 1979 as a cultural centre and is now rented by the community. It consists of exhibition rooms, museums, assembly rooms, and restaurants. Perhaps even Parisians, with their big Pompidou Centre, would envy the city of Odense's 'Brandt's Woolmill'!

Several other communities have been inspired by these successful initiatives in Aarhus:

• In Randers — a staid medium-size provincial town in Jutland — the old power station has been turned into a large cultural centre, which among several other things consists of no less than three concert rooms. There is no doubt that such an initiative can give a great lift to the cultural life of an otherwise ordinary provincial town. And this, in a place where a big part of the youth typically leaves town as soon as possible, the impulse for further education is close to zero, and interest in the arts is very low.

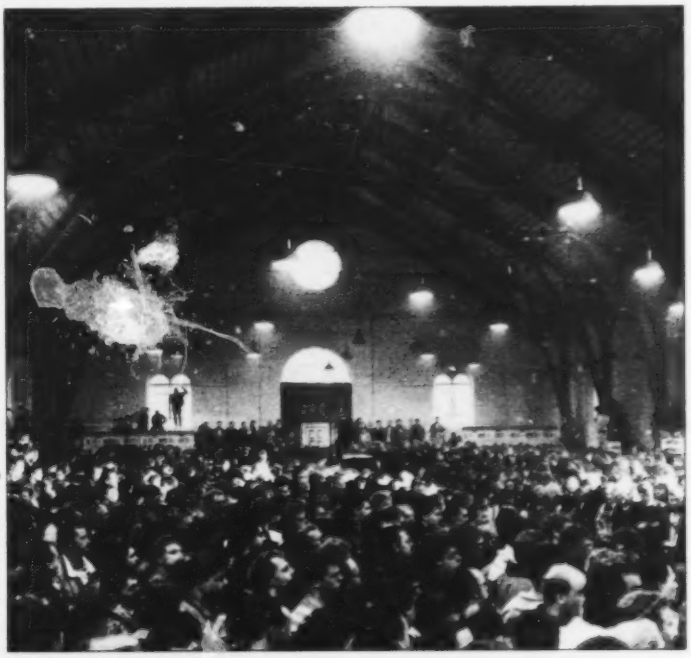

Photo: Ole Malling

The Riding-House in Aarhus
Protected in 1979, it is now used for rock concerts

Photo: Lone Mengel

Brandt's Woolmill, Odense
The whole area was rebuilt in 1979 as a cultural centre with exhibiton-rooms, museums, assembly rooms, restaurants, etc.

• In Horsens — another provincial town in Jutland — an old tobacco-factory is being restored for cultural purposes.

• And in Vejle — also in Jutland — it's the old police station and jailhouse that has been converted to foster more peaceful and artistic pursuits of life!

The book stresses the rich possibilities which present themselves, when the wish to preserve the architectural heritage of the past is joined with the effort to promote cultural development in the present. It has been the common aim of the Ministry of the Environment and the Decade Committee in Denmark to publicize this approach.

For old as well as more modern architecture — whatever the style and original purpose — different cultural activities will often fit as relevant new functions. In this way, the protection of the older industrial heritage can be assured by turning them into 'Houses of Culture' for the people.

■

Silk Roads: roads of dialogue

As the first of Unesco's ambitious overland Silk Roads expeditions has just been completed, the second, the sea voyage to retrace the great Maritime Route to the Orient, has also set sail from Venice.

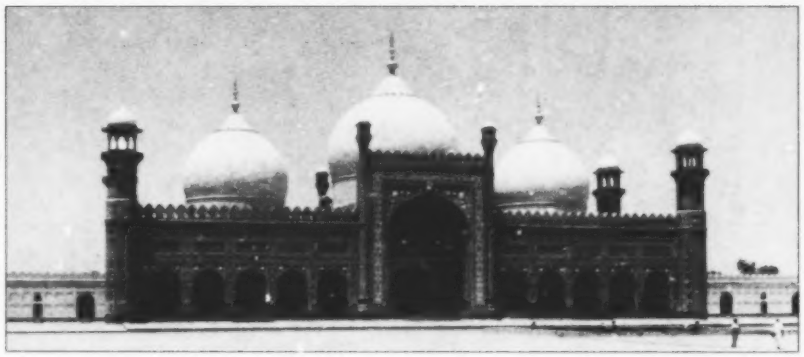

Photo: Unesco/S. Hague

The Badashi Mosque, Lahore, Pakistan. The Silk Roads were instrumental in the spread of new ideas, religions, and knowledge between East and West.

The 'Silk Roads' is a major international project launched by Unesco in 1988, in the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development. Slated to run through the end of the Decade in 1997, one of the primary objectives of the project is to mobilize the world's academic community in order to stimulate research on the silk roads. At the same time, the project will also highlight the cultural identity of the many and varied peoples along the different routes, and thus contribute to a better understanding of their cultural heritage.

international teams of scholars have begun to retrace the main silk roads over land and sea, matching their knowledge with that of local scholars during the seminars and meetings taking place at historic sites en route. The first expedition has recently returned from China where the team followed the ancient northern silk road from Xian to Kashgar and Urumqi. The expedition covered almost 10,000 km by road, and consisted of some 100 persons, including 25 scholars from all over the world, seven of China's leading scientists, and a large number of local specialists who joined the journey at various stages.

The existence of the silk roads dates back over two thousand years, and owes its real historical significance to much more than just commerce. All the same, trade was of course a prime element, beginning with silk. Cultured and produced in China for more than four thousand years, silk was already much valued by the Romans in the first century B.C. The secret of its production, however, remained a closely guarded secret in China, and it was not for several centuries that the technique spread elsewhere. (Smuggled out of China, it is said, by wandering monks who concealed the silk worms in their hollowed-out canes.) In fact, the cloth was so sought after by the Romans that they are reputed to have paid for it by exchanging its exact weight in gold!

Besides silk, any number of other valuable commodities were also carried by the trading caravans heading both east and west, including gold and silver, woollen and linen textiles, indigo, precious and semi-precious stones, ivory, jade, pearls, porcelain, glass, wine, spices and perfumes.

Past these commercial goods, there were other items of exchange as well. For example, from the west to the east came new breeds of horses, the grape vine, the alfalfa plant, and new techniques of giving colour to paints, and dying fabrics. And from the east to the west came the sugar cane, the coffee plant, the knowledge of how to make gunpowder and clocks, and the stirrup, which was to revolutionize horse-riding and cavalry warfare. So in fact, as well as an exchange of goods, there was also an important transfer of technology, and of agricultural species.

These great silk roads were to carry yet another kind of commodity, which was to prove even more important, and certainly more revolutionary, than any of the physical goods or even technologies which were transmitted between east and west. And this was in the realm of ideas, and knowledge: religions and philosophies, science and mathematics, art and music.

In this way, the silk roads became the highways by which these cultural and spiritual 'goods' spread from one land to another, and thus changed the course of history in the most profound ways possible. Beginning with the expeditions of Alexander the Great in 334 B.C., certain techniques of art, and ideals of beauty and harmony, were already being spread from the Mediterranean into Asia, which were later to have a profound influence all along the silk roads on the Buddhist art and temple frescoes of Central Asia, and later on China and Japan. Centuries after Alexander, Nestorian Christianity followed the same route to make its way into Central Asia and Mongolia, as Buddhism also began its journey from India into Central Asia, along the silk roads into China and Japan. Later still by the same route, Islamic culture would spread its influence, a good deal of which would be inherited from Persia, in architecture, science and mathematics, art, literature and music.

Xian, China. The Great Goose Pagoda. Xian is often designated as the easternmost point of the Silk Roads.

Photo: Unesco/A. Bailey

Then, for a thousand years or more, the silk roads fell into disuse, and whole cities, once thriving centres of learning, religion, culture and trade, were buried beneath the sands of the Gobi and Taklamakan deserts. At the turn of this century, almost a whole millennium after the silk roads had ceased to be the main highways of Asia, explorers from all over the world began to excavate the lost cities of the Gobi and the Taklamakan. Huge quantities of archaeological treasures, including priceless statues, wall frescoes, manuscripts, and ancient silks, were carted off to foreign museums. But by the 1920's, exploration had largely ceased, and the full historical picture of the silk roads has waited ever since to be pieced back together again.

As well as the two principal overland routes, one of which traced north, and the other south, around the Gobi and the Taklamakan deserts, there also existed an important maritime route which linked east and west. This maritime route, also sometimes known as the spice route, took on ever greater importance as the overland trails became more and more inaccessible. In the eighth and ninth centuries, the Arab peoples would introduce certain new techniques of shipbuilding which were to play a key role in the evolution of the maritime route; and later in the sixteenth century, it was the Portuguese who would open up the new channels of navigation between the West and the East.

Unesco's Maritime Expedition, which is being undertaken in the framework of the 'Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue', has been made possible by the generosity of H.M. Sultan Qaboos of Oman, who has placed at its disposal his own ship, the Fulk-al-Salamah (Ship of Peace). The starting-point of the expedition is Venice — city of Marco Polo, the 'West's window on the East'. After visiting 15 countries, the ship will conclude its voyage in Osaka, the ancient port of Naniwa, from where Japanese monks set sail to China in the eighth century. ■

Itinerary for the Maritime Route — Expedition and Seminars Foreseen

(1) **Italy - Venice**
13.10.90/23.10.90
Travel Literature: Origins and Role

(2) **Greece - Athens**
25.10.90/28.10.90
Cultural and Commercial Exchanges between the Orient and the Greek World

(3) **Turkey - Kusadasi**
29.10.90/31.10.90
The influence of Silk Roads on Turkish Culture and Arts

(4) **Egypt - Alexandria/Port Said/Port Suez**
2.11.90/7.11.90
Cultural Exchanges between Egypt and other Countries of the Silk Roads during the Islamic Period

(5) **Oman - Mina Raysut**
13.11.90/15.11.90

(6) **Oman - Mina Quaboos**
17.11.90/25.11.90
Significance of Omani Maritime Heritage to Silk Roads

(7) **Pakistan - Port Qasim/Karachi**
27.11.90/3.12.90
Al-Sind and Arab Seafaring: Culture, Commerce and Urbanization

(8) **India - Mormugao/Goa**
5.12.90/9.12.90
Maritime Encounters between 15th and 19th Centuries

(9) **Sri Lanka - Colombo**
11.12.90/17.12.90
Sri Lanka as the Mid Point in the East-West Silk Route and the Centre of Convergence of the Cross-Currents of Buddhist Philosophy

(10) **India - Madras**
19.12.90/24.12.90
1. India and the Roman World between 1st and 4th Century A.D.
2. India's Cultural Relationship with East and South-East Asia between 4th and 13th Century A.D.

(11) **Thailand - Phuket**
28.12.90/1.1.91

(12) **Malaysia - Port Kelang/Malacca**
2.1.91/6.1.91
Malaysian Maritime Traditions

(13) **Indonesia - Surabaya**
9.1.91/14.1.91
Harbour Cities along the Silk Roads

(14) **Thailand - Bangkok**
18.1.91/23.1.91
Ancient Trades and Cultural Contacts in South-East Asia

(15) **Brunei - Muara**
27.1.91/31.1.91
Effects and influence of the Maritime Route on Brunei Culture

(16) **Philippines - Manila**
3.2.91/7.2.91
Manila as the second Venice

(17) **China - Huangpu/Guangzhou (Canton)**
9.2.91/12.2.91

(18) **China - Quanzhou**
14.2.91/19.2.91
China and the Maritime Routes of the Silk Roads

(19) **Republic of Korea - Pusan/Kyongju**
22.2.91/26.2.91
Korean Culture and the Silk Roads

(20) **Japan - Hakata**
27.2.91/2.3.91

(21) **Japan - Osaka and Nara**
3.3.91/9.3.91
1. Silk Roads and Shosoin. Japanese Imperial Treasure House in Nara
2. Ceramics carried through the Maritime Silk Roads

Culture and development

H. E. Mr Paul-Marc Henry, Ambassador of France, is the President of the French National Committee for the World Decade for Cultural Development, and France's representative on the Unesco Intergovernmental Committee for the Decade. An author of a number of books and studies on development, Ambassador Henry has had a long and distinguished career in the United Nations and other related international organizations, including a ten year term as Director of Operations for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and three years as the Secretary-General of the Society for International Development. He was recently interviewed by Luc Legris of Unesco radio.

Your Excellency, three 'Development Decades' have already been launched by the United Nations, and it has to be admitted that they have not produced the results expected of them. Do you think this fourth attempt will attain its goals?

— In the first place, the goals of the first three UN Development Decades — especially the first and, to a lesser extent, the second, were quantitative. It is quite true that the major quantitative goal of the first Decade, namely a 5-per-cent growth rate in the Gross National Product of those countries defined at the time as developing countries, was not reached, or at least not right across the board. A whole string of countries, some of them in South East Asia and elsewhere in Asia, have actually achieved take-off, with growth rates well over 5 per cent. Other countries, some of them in Africa, have remained below that target figure. Thus, as far as the target figure is concerned, one can say that the results represented a failure. Perhaps this was because the goals were set too high, but I don't think that's where the failure really lay. We speak now about the actual concept of development and about growth. So what is development? Is it made up of social and cultural elements as well as specifically economic ones? It has been said, and was said at MONDIACULT in 1982, at Mexico City, that perhaps neglect or underestimation of cultural factors was one of the causes of the so-called failure of the Development Decades. One may or may not agree with that, but it can be said with certainty that accelerated technological development, the standardization of the models of consumption, together with population pressures, have raised problems unprecedented in the history of humankind. The cultural aspects of these problems have been widely underestimated, perhaps because they were not as decisive once as they are now.

Looking back at the activities of the first two years of the Decade, can you tell us which were the high points?

— I think the high points were mainly in the field of safeguarding of the cultural and natural heritage, including the ecological heritage — the environment, of course. This heritage constitutes a sort of cultural capital in the hands of governments, and forms an integral part of the cultural identity of their peoples: it gives meaning to their wish for development. I think that in this area the World Decade for Cultural Development has gotten off to a good start. It is up to us now to adjust the cultural issue to the issue of development proper within the framework of national policies.

Then the first aim of the Decade is that the cultural dimension of development be taken into consideration?

— I think that aim is on the way to being achieved.

And yet the cultural aspect of development has often been pushed aside to make room for more classic cultural activities such as folklore, theatre and so forth. Has this been given enough emphasis in the past two years? Is it not urgent to sensitize both governments and the general public to this objective?

— It's certainly a matter of urgency, as there's a slight time gap, if you will, between cultural activities in the proper meaning of the term, of the classic sort, if I may call them that, and cultural activities in economic development. Yes, there's a gap of say, a few months or even a few years.

This structure had to be set up, but it is a novel structure, as yet unrefined; the mechanisms of co-ordination between the Intergovernmental Committee for the World for Cultural Development Decade, and the Development Decade are still under discussion, as well as the internal mechanisms of the Specialized Agencies of the U.N. For we must not forget the Specialized Agencies, each of which has specific counterparts in the public services of every country. Thus WHO pairs off with public health, Unesco with education and ILO with labour. These divisions, which were defined on an *a priori* basis in 1945-46, must be transcended; while respecting institutional autonomy, we must go beyond all these bounds and get the Specialized Agencies to work together towards a common goal wherever the significance of the cultural factor is apparent.

We're now talking about the role the cultural dimension in development plays in influencing the cohesiveness of the international community, with its diversity of civilizations and cultures. Do you think the Decade will have a favourable effect on

major social problems, on the ills of our century — on the big social issues that trouble the world today, such as drugs, unemployment, apartheid, terrorism and illiteracy?

— Thank you for listing the problems in this way, because this is how they were listed, more or less, in the preparatory work for the next United Nations Development Decade. In fact these ills have been defined much more precisely now than they were a decade or so ago. We now know that a number of harmful effects, including those you have listed, are related to development or, if you will, to rapid technological change, and to population pressure.

Even if the strategy for the World Decade for Cultural Development was prepared by Unesco and the United Nations, its success depends in great part on the Member States. How do you evaluate the way these countries have mobilized their energies thus far for active and effective participation in this Decade?

— Thus far, I believe, mobilization has, in one way or another, been sectoral. For example, there has been considerable mobilization for the natural environment. Much progress has been achieved in the development of general environmental policies, by the United Nations and at the regional and national levels. A second example is government mobilization for dealing with the basic problems of public health, such as new endemic diseases.

Now, I think governments have mobilized generally for dealing with the employment question, but they are not organized to deal with the urgent situation that's developing everywhere and, in some cases, is rendering governments almost inoperative. The general concept of development is being brought up for review, and cultural factors are going to play a fundamental role in its redefinition. Governments are now preparing themselves for this task. Setting up national committees is not enough, even though this is actually being done. But the very fact that it is being done is beginning to mobilize national governmental development structures. This is a very important point. Moreover, when the major financial institutions quite rightly imposed monetary adjustment policies, those monetary adjustments brought the whole issue of development into question, including the social structure and the ills of which you speak, which, unfortunately, are growing at lightning speed.

Photo: Unesco/Nagata

'It is up to us now to adjust the cultural issue to the issue of development proper.' — Paul-Marc Henry

But the National Commissions for Unesco and the international governmental and non-governmental organizations should play an important role. Am I right in thinking that they are playing this role at both the national and the regional levels?

— Yes, but then perhaps there should perhaps be a gentle but thorough-going review of all the functions of these organizations, which were established in the aftermath of the events of 1945–46. Forty years later we live in a different world. In one sense, it is a better world, for technology has shown that considerable improvements can be made in food production, for example. On the other hand, from the perspective of the public authorities, and of public opinion, today, it is much more difficult to achieve a truly systematic organization of the struggle against the ills of which you speak, which together represent a process of rapid and stunning cultural change, especially as regards young people.

One last question, Your Excellency: what major Unesco themes for the Decade have been planned for the coming years?

— This is going to be a subject of discussion, but the major themes are those of the Development Decade proper.

First of all, there is the question of general organization, that is to get the necessary governmental reflection going and the necessary structures set up.

Secondly, the cultural components of all the projects in question must be identified — and the World Bank agrees.

Thirdly, and most importantly, I think, we're settling on the themes of youth and unemployment, and, possibly, alas, drugs and all those contemporary ills as well: urban growth, of course, and the issue of rural development in relation to agricultural production — global production, if you will. A very important motivating factor for global production must be stressed here: the motivating force that derives from relating the cultural identity of a community to its own ambitions — not only its quantifiable ambitions, but its spiritual ambitions as well. I believe we're on the verge of defining the general concept of development in the terms I've indicated. ■

Executive Board considers Decade *(continued from page 1)*

evident. But I thought one should remind oneself of some of the basic ideas of the World Decade, like interdependence, quality and urgency before turning to the question of what the Intergovernmental Committee recommends to you and how to achieve these goals.

The Committee wishes to point out that it is essential to take seriously the challenge of the International Strategy for the Fourth Development Decade. It appeared to be very urgent to make our ideas heard in the Ad hoc Committee of the Whole, which is preparing the International Development Strategy. As a result, the Director-General of Unesco approached the Secretary-General of the United Nations with amendments and sent over a delegation to New York. I am happy to report that many of the members serving on the Intergovernmental Committee exerted themselves with their representatives in New York to get recognition of the cultural dimension of development in the IDS. Because of differences of opinion about other matters little attention was paid to our queries. I think this result is not satisfactory.

A second point of attention is ECOSOC, because it discusses the question of the mid-term review of the World Decade. The mid-term review presents us with a second chance to orient and energize the World Decade. The mid-term review will take place in 1993. It will no doubt consist of certain events, reaffirming and celebrating the Decade. On the other hand one may expect a serious reflection on the future course of the Decade to take place in that year. The mid-term review figures importantly on the agenda of the Intergovernmental Committee in February next year. A major conference may be useful, with as its theme 'Culture and Development'.

A clear position by Unesco and its Member States on this question is a matter of urgency, since this issue will be discussed at the United Nations General Assembly from 18 to 29 October 1990. At that time the UN will consider the resolution of ECOSOC (E/1989/107), which invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of Unesco to continue their inquiry into the appropriate means for conducting a mid-term evaluation of the Decade.

I am happy to report that an important element for the mid-term review has been taking form over the summer. The idea of a World Report on Culture was already discussed in the General Conference. This report should do for Culture and Development what the Brundtland report did, also by extensive hearings, for environment and development. As I consider this major Report a heavy financial responsibility and an important intellectual task, I have discussed this with Sweden and with other representatives of the Nordic countries who first promoted this idea. These discussions now lead me to think that this report is feasible. I hope to put the modalities of this extraordinary effort before the Intergovernmental Committee next year (February 1991). This report could be central to the mid-term review, but it could also give inspiration to the United Nations system at the end of this century.

One of the problems the World Decade has to address, is how to create the feeling of a common venture. There is still a gap in communications there.

The regional level may be more effectively used to organize World Decade activities. I have come away from several regional meetings with the feeling that interesting developments might take place on that level. The feeling that we are together engaged in a common effort, is however not yet sufficiently established. The feeling of a common venture could be strengthened by launching a World Day for Cultural Development, in a clear reference to the World Decade. This day would be May 31st. The day could focus attention on the national, regional and international level. Nobody will be disappointed if already on May 31, 1991, certain events would take place. In general it would be helpful to the feeling of a common effort if the day would stimulate satellite transmissions around the world. Indeed I think it would help the World Decade to link the efforts of countries together to proclaim an annual theme to be highlighted on the World Day for Cultural Development. Out of the many issues emerging in the World Decade certain themes could be selected that are large and exciting enough to involve many regions and countries, yet concrete and relevant enough to draw attention to the Decade. In this way the Decade could be an educational process for the international community. An experiment in this sense will be the International Forum on Democracy and Culture in Prague (Czechoslovakia) which will take place on the World Day for Cultural Development (May 31, 1991) under the chairmanship of President Havel.

It could be followed by International Forums on:

1992 - Culture, Commerce and Roads
1993 - Culture and Development
1994 - Culture, Agriculture, Nature
1995 - Culture and Economy
1996 - Culture and Health
1997 - Culture, Art, Creativity.

These themes could link culture with certain areas which are not normally within the realm of culture and thereby attract the attention and expertise of agencies and programs of the United Nations system like the WHO, FAO, UNDP and the World Bank.

Quite another form of cooperation may develop around the International Programme which you already discussed and approved at your 134th session. Here certain broad areas of cooperation have been defined, to be funded from extra-budgetary resources. Now that we have your approval in principle, and are awaiting the final decisions of the General Conference, I think the Intergovernmental Committee should already begin developing projects and start the fundraising.

I do not have the time to speak on several problems that have been raised in the Intergovernmental Committee and that remain as yet unsolved. These concern the specific profile of World Decade projects to be funded out of Participation Programme resources following the recommendations of the Intersectoral Committee, and the place within the Decade of the major projects such as the 'Encounter of Two Worlds' or 'The Silk Roads'. I also feel we still have to improve the organizational structure and especially the fundraising. I am looking forward to creative cooperation with the Fund for the Promotion of Culture.

If I wanted to sum up my way of looking at the priorities for the World Decade it would be like this. We should turn from procedural matters to content. Only if the content is clear can the form be found. Organization and money should follow.

This content should be cultural. If you ask me what culture is, I will answer with the simple definition given by the great twentieth century poet T. S. Eliot: culture is what makes life worth living. ■

Decision 135 EX 5.3.3, adopted by the Executive Board of Unesco at its 135th session, October 25, 1990

The Executive Board,

1. *Recalling* 24 C/Resolution 11.13 by which the General Conference decided to set up the Intergovernmental Committee of the World Decade for Cultural Development,

2. *Also recalling* 25 C/Resolution 3.4 adopted by the General Conference concerning the Decade, which stressed the need to strengthen the programmes planned for the Decade and which, more specifically,

(a) reaffirms the importance of taking the cultural dimension of development into account in the international development strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and in technical assistance programmes implemented by Unesco (para. 3),

(b) invites Member States to encourage the general public to play an active part in the implementation of the Decade (para. 4 (d)),

(c) invites the Director-General to undertake the necessary measures within the context of the regular programme and the Participation Programme in order to ensure the provision of adequate assistance for Decade activities proposed by Member States, to provide appropriate support for the Intergovernmental Committee of the Decade and to define, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the modalities for a mid-Decade evaluation, to take place in 1993 (para. 6),

3. *Noting with satisfaction* the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Decade on its activities, and its recommendations regarding the functioning of the Committee and the activities involved in implementing the Plan of Action and in promoting and co-ordinating the Decade (135 EX/13),

4. *Further recalling* decision 4.3.2 taken by the Executive Board at its 134th session regarding the Director-General's report on the setting up of an International Programme for the World Decade for Cultural Development,

5. *Recommends* to the Intergovernmental Committee for the World Decade for Cultural Development that it continue to examine the possibility of preparing a report on the situation of culture in the world;

6. *Recommends* that the Director-General foster the incorporation by international organizations, especially those of the United Nations system, of the cultural dimension into their development projects; and that he place very particular emphasis on taking the cultural dimension of development into account during the implementation of the Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade;

7. *Recommends* that the Director-General propose to the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session that the Intergovernmental Committee be mandated to guide and monitor the planning and implementation of the proposed international programme;

8. *Further recommends* that the Director-General submit for the consideration and decision of the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session the proposal that 31 May be declared 'World Day for Cultural Development' (Day of all the World's Cultures);

9. *Invites* the Director-General to:

(a) study the possibility of providing greater support under the regular programme and the Participation Programme in the 1992–1993 biennium in order to:

(i) provide even more transparent, more efficient and adequate assistance to activities proposed by Member States, in particular in the framework of their regional and interregional co-operation;

(ii) contribute to the preparation of major projects in line with the domains adopted by the International Programme for the World Decade for Cultural Development;

(iii) prepare joint activities with other institutions of the United Nations system in the framework of the Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade;

(iv) prepare the 1993 mid-Decade evaluation; and

(v) continue to ensure the effective functioning of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Decade and its subsidiary bodies;

(b) submit proposals on these various questions to the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session for consideration and decision.

A new step toward the rebirth of the Alexandria Library

An agreement between the Egyptian government and Unesco was signed in Paris on the 26th of October, 1990, by Mr Ahmed Fathi Sorour, the Egyptian Minister of Education, and Mr Federico Mayor, Unesco's Director-General. This agreement establishes the legal and administrative framework that will enable construction work to start on the new Alexandrian Library. Specifically, the document lays the framework for the three administrative structures to be set up: an International Commission, an International Executive Committee, and an Executive Secretariat headed by the project administrator.

The rebirth of the Alexandria Library is an answer to the Egyptian authorities' wish to restore Alexandria to the international role it once played in antiquity, by creating a fully computerized library, specialized in Mediterranean culture.

Unesco, called upon by the Egyptian government, has agreed to take an active part in this project within the framework of the World Decade. To this end, Unesco organized an international architectural competition financed by the United Nations Development Program, from which the winning design proposal for the site was selected.

The International Commission, chaired by Mrs Susan Mubarak, met for the first time in Assouan on the 11th and 12th of February 1990, bringing together prominent intellectuals and political personalities. Although 64 million US dollars have been raised already, there still remains 100 million dollars to be found.

The signing of the agreement is an important step toward the inauguration of the library, slated for 1995. And as was the goal for the reconstruction of the Abu Simbel and Philae temples, the Alexandria Library project is the fruit of wide reaching international co-operation.

NEW DECADE PROJECTS

Unesco Awards Further Decade Funds

The Intersectoral Committee for the Decade held its second meeting of the year at Unesco Headquarters in Paris on September 24, 1990, to award the remaining Participation Programme funds for the 1990–91 biennium. The Committee allocated US$ 277,000 to 35 projects, thereby committing the total US$ 1 million in Participation Programme funds made available for the biennium. Another 91 projects were recognized as official Decade activities, without receiving grants.

In Africa, a pan-African project entitled 'The Iron Road', submitted by Mozambique, was awarded a grant of US$ 20,000. In Africa, iron is a symbol of the past and of preservation, in its essential role in the development of agricultural tools and implements and in its prehistoric origins. At the same time, it is also a symbol of change and of the future, in that it is identified with industrialization. In many traditional African cultures, the blacksmiths had a very special place, regarded both with esteem and disdain, with fear and with awe. Even now blacksmiths and iron-workers often form a separate caste in African society, and in traditional mythology, mastery of iron-working is associated with the mastery of magic, and it is said that this knowledge was communicated to mankind by the gods.

As this technology, as well as the iron objects themselves, was transmitted from one people to another, iron became a vehicle for intercultural exchange and co-operation throughout the continent. The project funds awarded will be used to underwrite a first experts meeting in June 1991, and to elaborate the full scale program to be undertaken through the remainder of the Decade. The project has received enthusiastic support from a number of African Member States, and received favourable comment at the last Executive Board.

In Asia, a wide scale regional initiative has also received funding. The project will examine the specific cultural factors at work in a selected number of successful socio-economic development projects in the region, with a view to better establishing how cultural factors may be positively harnessed in the development process. The study aims to link scholars, cultural experts, and development administrators, and could lead to further action-research projects in the region. The programme will be administered by Indonesia.

In Latin America, one of the great civilizations of the pre-Columbian epoch will be the focus of a research study entitled 'El Mundo Maya' — the Maya World. The project is seen as an important element of the celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Encounter of Two Worlds (coinciding with the arrival of Columbus in the New World in 1492), and the Decade grant will again serve as seed money for the development of a major project to be funded from extra-budgetary resources. The Mayan civilization possessed a rich monumental architecture and sacred art, a complex cosmology, and a highly developed knowledge of science and mathematics. While a great deal has been lost since the 16th Century, much still remains, including the great Mayan pyramids and ruined cities of Central America. The Mayan language is today still spoken by over four million people in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Belize, and Mayan handicrafts and textiles are among the most beautiful and original produced in the region. The project aims to help restore the great Mayan cultural legacy, and to foster a greater appreciation of the invaluable cultural, ecological and archaeological heritage of the Maya World.

In Fiji, the Department of Town and Country Planning will undertake a historic and prehistoric site survey of the Island of Levuka, to identify and record the cultural heritage. The survey and resulting inventory will be utilized in formulating an environmental strategy and physical development plan.

In the European region, Turkey will host an international symposium on Tourism Architecture in the Mediterranean. The well known problems of mass tourism, with its congested high-rise beach hotels and urban sprawl along the Mediterranean coast, will be examined in contraposition to the potential for cultural tourism, with its own attendant need to preserve and foster the natural, cultural, and archaeological heritage.

In all, 94 projects have received financing for the 1990–91 biennium, and a further 150 recognized as official Decade Activities. A total of some 410 requests were submitted in 1990, an increase of almost two-fold from 1989. At the same time, funds available for small project grants increased from US$ 105,000 in 1989, to US$ 1,000,000 for 1990–91.

FORUM AND MEETINGS

Prague international forum: culture and democracy

The Director-General of Unesco, Mr Federico Mayor, has announced that a major international forum on the theme 'Culture and Democracy' will take place in Prague, Czechoslovakia, from May 30–June 1, 1991. To be held in the framework of the Decade under the auspices of Unesco, and chaired by President Vaclav Havel, the conference will bring together political leaders, intellectuals, artists, writers, and journalists from the four corners of the globe, in an attempt to paint a picture of the state of democracy in the world today. In the light of the great political events which have transpired all over the world in the past eighteen months, the forum has been organized to coincide with the proposed 'World Day for Cultural Development' on May 31.

Among the themes to be explored are:

- The Transition to Democracy
- Democracy and the Media
- The International Dimension of Democracy
- Religion, Ethics and Democracy; and,
- The Role of Intellectuals and Artists in a Democratic Society.

Sub-Regional Meeting on Cultural Dimension of Development — Bangkok (Thailand)

Some fifteen experts from South-East Asia met in Bangkok (Thailand) July 3–6, 1990, to study the relation between culture and development. Jointly organ-

ized by the National Culture Commission of Thailand and Unesco, the meeting was attended by representatives from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Three main topics were discussed:

1. Promotion of awareness of the cultural dimension of development among the general public, as well as decision makers and planners.
2. Strategies for incorporating sociocultural factors into development planning.
3. Training of cultural development workers.

The participants agreed on the need to coordinate planning between development administrators and cultural policy workers, and to better understand each other's concerns. To this end, further dialogue needs to be promoted, and joint studies undertaken both on the concepts and the practical implications of the cultural dimension of development and the formulation of appropriate cultural policies. Some felt the term 'cultural framework for development' would better reflect the concern raised by the first objective of the World Decade.

Intergovernmental Committee to meet February 4–8

The next session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the World Decade for Cultural Development will be held at Unesco Headquarters in Paris, February 4–8, 1991.

Among the items to be considered are the draft International Programme for the Decade; a proposal for a World Culture Report; and the recommendation for a major mid-term evaluation of the Decade in 1993. *Culture Plus* will bring you news of the results of the meeting, in its next issue.

European Regional Meeting on the Decade

The Norwegian National Commission for Unesco and the Norwegian Committee for the Decade will organize, in cooperation with Unesco, a meeting on the coordination of Decade projects in Europe, to take place in Oslo, 2-5 May, 1991.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- bring together those persons responsible for Decade Committees and/or in charge of national Decade activities, from all countries in the European region;
- exchange ideas and experiences on Decade activities;
- evaluate projects already underway;
- improve coordination of Decade activities sponsored by European Member States;
- propose new projects that might be undertaken within the framework of the Decade; and,
- examine strategies to promote the objectives of the Decade in the region.

To provide the maximum opportunity for the exchange of ideas and experiences, a good deal of the meeting will be given over to group sessions. Plenary sessions will deal primarily with strategies for implementation and broad policy matters.

The meeting takes place in the context of 'the new Europe' with its vast potential for intra — and inter-regional cultural cooperation. Faced with such challenges as the multi-cultural society, indigenous peoples in the context of the nation-state, the human dimension of development, culture and environment, and culture and democracy, the organizers feel the time is ripe to discuss how to promote better cooperation within Europe, without being 'Eurocentric'. At the same time, how can closer links be forged with other regions — links based on real intercultural respect, rather than hazy notions of cultural universality?

Ingeborg Breines
Secretary-General
Norway National Commission for Unesco

EXHIBIT

An exhibition for the blind

Among activities planned as part of the World Decade, an exhibition, 'Graphic Tactile Art', will be on view at Unesco Headquarters from January 3 to 15, 1991. The show, organized at the initiative of the Belgian Permanent Delegation to Unesco, is designed to contribute towards greater participation of the blind in the world of art. Using an innovative technique drawing on the principles of Braille, graphic tactile art adds a dimension of volume to drawings, engravings and other prints. The resulting relief enables the blind to 'see' these compositions with their fingers. Some 60 works will be exhibited, notably those by Jean-Michel Folon, Octave Landuyt and from the Fondation Herge.

Credit: Unesco Sources.

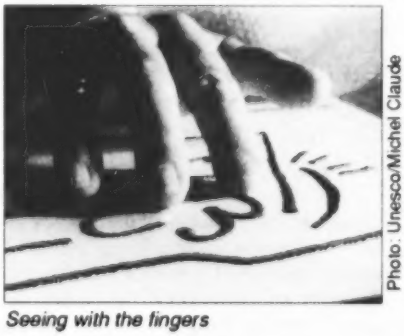

Photo: Unesco/Michel Claude

Seeing with the fingers

Culture plus, **the quarterly newsletter of the World Decade for Cultural Development, published in English and French, is not an official document of the Organization. It is distributed free of charge. The reproduction of articles is welcomed.**

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BOOK REVIEWS

Buddhist Art: A new work in the Unesco Collection of Representative Works

Unesco and the Olizane Press have just co-produced a book entitled *Buddhist Art*, which, for the very first time, presents to the general public, a clear and concise view of the various forms of artistic expression to be found in Buddhist art. This work, which spans the period from the very first symbols to the age of maturity in India, is extremely well-researched and lavishly illustrated. It follows the historical and geographical development of Buddhism and traces its evolution in the various South East Asian countries.

This work is based on Unesco's 16th travelling exhibition, in the context of action for the mutual appreciation of world cultures.

Credit: The Month at Unesco.

Cultural Factors and Rural Development Projects in Central Africa: Points of Reference

This question, which is of particularly vital importance for the Third World is closely examined in this excellent book. Although this work only studies one region, Central Africa, it provides an excellent model which can be transposed to a number of other regions, given the practical data specific to this region, the analyses and the wealth and variety of the viewpoints and questions which are dealt with in an extremely clear and perspicacious way.

This work, entitled *Cultural factors and rural development projects in Central Africa: Points of reference*, is published by the International Centre of Bantu Civilizations (CICIBA, Libreville) and L'Harmattan Press (Paris, 1989, 182 pages). On reading this study, it will be seen that the term 'culture' is taken in the broadest sense of the word, as it includes all the aspects which are specific to the different kinds of life-styles.

Given the limited space available, we can only list the principal themes addressed in this work: beliefs and rituals; magic, fetishism, witchcraft and taboos, which are often obstacles to efficient action and the adoption of modern scientific and technological methods; agriculture (working the land, crops, choice of vegetable and animal species); food; task-sharing between men and women; methods used for building dwellings; crafts, to which insufficient support is given; hygiene, health, diseases (respective roles and combination of traditional and modern medicine); cooperatives, commercialization of products; social structures (the role of the father, mother, leaders, young people); training and the handing down — mainly out-of-school — of traditions; oral culture and literacy.

Credit: The Month at Unesco.

Planning and Operation of Cultural Events for Broader participation in Cultural Life

The Asian Cultural Centre for Unesco (ACCU) organized the 1989 Regional Training Seminar for Cultural Personnel in Asia and the Pacific — planning and operation of cultural events for broader participation in cultural life — with the cooperation of Unesco, the Japanese National Commission for Unesco, and the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan. The 120-page report of that training seminar, now published by ACCU, features numerous suggestions on how to plan and implement more effective cultural events with specific reference to the Asian and Pacific cultural context. A number of cultural events programmes, relevant to the region's needs, are presented in the publication, which may serve as models for similar future undertakings in Asia and the Pacific.

For further information, write to ACCU, 6 Fukuromachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 162 Japan.

PERIODICALS

Museum: Art Nouveau Heritage

Art nouveau, Jugendstil, Modernismo, Secession, Liberty Style, Style Moderne... the linguistic jumble with which the turn-of-the-century aesthetic movement (typified in the work of Guimard, Horta, Tiffany and others) was named points up its cosmopolitan character. English speakers labelled it in French and the French and Italians used an English term while the Finns, Czechs and Hungarians adopted a German derivative. In fact, with its swirl-like evocations of vegetation combined with a nostalgia for neo-medieval forms, Art nouveau was the first international architecture and design movement of this century.

Truly international, too, as issue No. 167 (September, 1990) of Unesco's quarterly magazine *Museum* shows with articles and illustrations from Canada, the United States, Cuba, Argentina and Chile as well as Art nouveau's home ground, Europe. In fact, this particular issue of *Museum* emerged from a Unesco project undertaken in the framework of the World Decade, which readers will also find described.

After more than half a century in the doldrums, the Art nouveau heritage is today being revived and museums around the world are taking an active part in that revival.

In this issue of *Museum* readers will find reports on town houses converted into museums in Brussels, Darmstadt and Subotica (Yugoslavia), not to forget Moscow and what writer Maxim Gorky laughingly called a 'preposterous home' that has now become a memorial museum to him.

Glassware, fabrics, furniture and other design items in the Art nouveau style are reviewed through collections in museums ranging from Berlin, Atlanta (Georgia) and Trondheim (central Norway) to one that was nicknamed 'the gypsy palace' in Budapest.

Among other regular features, this issue's 'Frankly Speaking' column asks if museums are prepared to face such natural disasters as earthquakes and cyclones, while 'a City and its Museums' visits Pyongyong.

Now in its 42nd year, Museum *appears in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish. It may be purchased from Unesco sales agents or directly from: UPP/V, Unesco, 1 rue Miollis, 75015 PARIS, France.*

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR THE PROMOTION OF CULTURE

This issue brings you a cross-section of the world's vast cultural diversity that the Fund helps preserve and renew. In projects throughout the world men and women of all ages are taking charge of their own cultural destinies.

GRASSROOTS SUCCESSES

Cultural resources for development in Sierre Leone

Making an exception to its rule, the Fund's Council in 1986 gave a second grant to the Jangee All-Age Community Education and Cultural Resource Centre in southern Sierra Leone, West Africa. In 1983, the Jangee Centre received a grant to launch a new phase of training activities; a second grant, matched by the Leventis Foundation, went towards the purchase of a van needed to bring raw materials to the Centre. Launched in 1974 as a private vocational arts education association, the Centre has trained over one thousand adults and young people (some of whom are handicapped and disabled) in the current phase that began in 1984. It provides employment and contributes to preserving as well as revitalizing traditional culture. In particular, it contributes to keeping needed human resources from drifting to urban areas, as young people find meaning and sustenance in locally rooted handicrafts. A rare achievement for bodies of this kind, the Centre has become self-reliant and financially viable.

Photo: JACECREC

Learning raffia weaving at the Jangie Centre

The Centre provides training programmes in many different areas: vocational handicrafts of all kinds, ranging from metalwork to soap-production; commercial skills; documentation of traditional culture; functional literacy; fish-farming and agro-allied industries. The American 'Trickle Up Program' helps follow up on this training by providing seed grants to those villagers who wish to launch their own small business enterprises. It is estimated that about three-quarters of the local community have benefited from this incentive scheme. Other external sources of in-kind help include the Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE), the Sierra Leone chapter of Rotary International, and the African Development Foundation, Washington, D.C.

With sales from its own showroom now its main source of funds, the Centre's management aims to turn it into a 'cultural industry institute' that will link vocational cultural eduction with income-generating enterprises within the local community and beyond. In May 1990 it marked this new departure by renaming itself the 'Albert Margai Institute of Design, Crafts and Appropriate Technology (ADMICAT)'.

Contact: Mr Ed. F. Milton Margai, Project Manager, JACECREC, P.O. Box 6, Mattru Jong, Bonthe District, Sierra Leone.

GRASSROOTS SUCCESSES

Songs of the mill-stone: keeping cultural memory alive

In the mountainous hinterland of the city of Pune in Maharashtra State in western India, generations of peasant women have sung rhyming and rhythmic couplets at the mill stone every morning at dawn. These songs are not only of great poetic value, they also articulate a worldview. As a commentary on real life conditions, these songs are a valuable part of the collective memory. But the mill stones are fast disappearing, and with them the older generation of women. Before they both vanish forever, the Village Community Development Association in Pune has launched a two-pronged pilot project in Malushi *taluk* (county) which comprises 131 villages. With grants from the Fund, as well as from the Fondation pour le Progrès de l'Homme in Paris, the Association's volunteers are recording all the extant couplets on computer. At the same time, they hope to keep this heritage alive by restoring it to the peasant women as a tool of reflection and discussion on their current condition.

Photo: JACECREC

A Maharashtrian peasant woman harvesting grain

The recording operation breaks new ground by putting the corpus of couplets on computer in India's *devanagari* script. By September 1990 almost fifteen thousand couplets have been recorded, with an estimated eight thousand more to go. Eliciting this material has involved long sessions, held generally in the evenings, with almost four hundred of the area's older women as the key informants. VCDA's animators, local women themselves, have been impressed by their rich harvest from so many individual memories. Younger women, even young girls, have also agreed to learn and memorize the songs.

The project is a 'cultural laboratory' in other ways as well. The songs are being explored in small group sessions, not only in the villages but also on the fringes of Pune, where many women have been forced to emigrate for work. The songs are helping them maintain a link with their roots, as they realize that they too can speak in their own ancestral voices.

Mr Daniel Charron, a French film-maker working with the association 'Frères des hommes', recently completed an 80-minute documentary on the project entitled *La mémoire vive* (A Live Memory) filmed in the village of Dudhavre. A version of the film in Marathi, the local language, is already being used in other village settings to create further support for the development of the project.

Contact: Ms. Hema Rairkar, Village Community Development Association, Rairkar Bungalow, 884 Deccan Gymkhana, Pune 411004, India.

Guatemalan children on a cultural pathway

In a small town in the Guatemalan *altiplano*, three hundred and fifty children, helped by some fifty young adults, have launched their very own campaign of cultural research and development. Through a programme of music, dance, historical research and familiarization with Maya religious beliefs, launched with the help of the Fund and the association 'Traditions for Tomorrow', with additional help from children in a Swiss village, these young people are illustrating their commitment to the search for cultural identity. They belong to a group called 'K'aslem Bey', which means 'Pathway and Life' in the Maya-Cakchiquel language.

Explaining the initiative in an article written for the Swiss magazine *femina* by Daniel Wermus (*femina*, No. 38, 23 September 1990) Erasmo, K'aslem Bey's leader, stressed the autonomous and local origin of the project. 'We have built ourselves up from our own resources', he said. 'Our name itself reflects the Maya worldview, inspired by an ancient proverb: "Life is a pathway, the pathway is life, and he who stops will die." '

The group has acquired musical instruments (a marimba, guitars and mandolins) and publications for a library on Maya traditions. It has purchased printing equipment to disseminate the results of its research and has begun to weave cloth for the costumes used in traditional ceremonies. Its efforts have already led to a renewal amongst the children of faith in their ancestral cultural and spiritual traditions. This means renewed interest in rituals and ceremonies and budding vocations which will forge a link of continuity between the generations.

K'aslem Bey's example is being followed in neighbouring communities. The group has also produced a number of community leaders. It has inspired a series of initiatives in other domains, such as a system for drinking water and the construction of a village meeting house, a literacy programme for women and the setting up of a consumers' cooperative.

Contact: Mr Diego Gradis, Traditions for Tomorrow, La Pièce, 1180 Rolle, Switzerland. Tel: (31) 21-825 23 31.

Arts education: applied research in Southeast Asia

Are the materials available for art education in Southeast Asia in harmony with the needs and identities of the region's children and young people? If not, what is to be done to change the situation? How best to develop textbooks rooted in Asia's own artistic traditions? Such were the questions debated by art educators and curriculum experts from Negara Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand brought together at the Suansunandha Teachers' College in Bangkok in February 1990. At the end of their discussions the participants gave the green light for a three-year textbook development project. The first step in the project will be a survey of existing arts textbooks. This will provide the data necessary to develop textbook modules suitable for the teaching of arts at different levels. The basic shared module would include all printed materials used to reinforce art teaching and reflect the cultural heritage of the entire region without excluding the universal context in which art is taught. A grant from the Fund made the February 1990 meeting possible. It was organized by the Regional Centre for Archaelogy and Fine Arts (SPAFA) of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) with the help of the Thai Government's Teacher Education Department. The Fund's Director, Mr. Y. R. Isar, who attended part of the meeting, noted one particularly interesting innovation. Many observers from educational institutions throughout Thailand had also been invited. Their interaction with the panel of experts made for a more lively and broadly useful 'expert meeting' than is generally the case. SPAFA also mounted for the occasion an exhibition of materials used for arts education in Southeast Asia.

With additional funds secured under the World Decade for Cultural Development, SPAFA is now moving the project forward. We hope it will receive the support needed to see it through to a successful conclusion. It promises to provide a scholarly springboard for a creative encounter between the arts of the past and the concerns of the present, a convergence that will help awaken esthetic awareness among the citizens of tomorrow.

Contact: Prof. Bertoldo J. Manta, Senior Specialist in Visual Arts, SPAFA Regional Centre, Darakarn Building, 920 Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok 10110, Thailand. Tel: (662) 381-1310. Fax: (662) 381-2546.

A new museum in the Andes

The people of modern Ecuador have a strong sense of their varied cultural roots. The country has been the scene of striking innovations such as the Museobus created jointly by the Museum of the Central Bank of Ecuador and the Fund, which in 1982 contributed to the cost of the vehicle that now brings museum objects to the doorstep of adults and children throughout the country.

In the Andean town of Cotacachi in the north of Ecuador, which is both a tourist destination and a commercial centre, local activists are now busy creating a new museum that will help reveal, explore and preserve many aspects of traditional culture. The municipality is helping restore the former town hall in which the museum will be housed, and will subsidize its operations and provide suitable staff. The museum will cover ethnography, ethnomusicology and crafts development. Since the people of Cotacachi and its region are proud of their age-old skills and forms of artistic expression, and since they want to keep these traditions alive the new museum is conceived as a cultural and educational centre that will do far more than store and display objects. It will contribute to the preservation and renewal of craftsmanship as well as intangible cultural values such as music, religious feasts, languages and myths. With the help of the Fund and the Adveniat Foundation in Essen, Federal Republic of Germany, the staff of the still gestating museum have already launched a varied programme of activities. An ethnomusicological section has been equipped with both traditional instruments and modern audio and video recording equipment and is performing its tasks of recording and analysis. It has helped support the documentation of a number of traditional festivals, the launching of a musical workshop, and the creation of a choral group. The museum will also house a public library and a sales point for local crafts. In the words of its Director: 'We have planned a modern museum, one that is alive, dynamic and didactic, that aims to contribute to the cultural, social and economic development of our people and our region.'

Photo: Museo Etnográfico, Musical y Artesanal, Cotachi

Cotacachi keeps its heritage of religious feasts alive

Contact: Sra Virginia Romero de Jaramillo, Directora, Museo Etnográfico, Musical y Artesanal del I. Concejo Muncipal de Cotacachi, Cotacachi, Provincia de Imbura, Ecuador.

GRASSROOTS SUCCESSES

Acousmatica colloquium

As this issue goes to press, fifteen young composers of electronic music are preparing both musical works and ideas for an international colloquium that will take place on the evenings of 14–15 January 1991 at Unesco House in Paris. This event, which will combine both musical performances and the exchange of ideas, is being organized by a new association called Acousmatica with help from the Fund, Unesco's Youth Division and the International Music Council. Business firms have agreed to loan high quality sound reproduction equipment.

The purpose of these unusual musical evenings is to promote recognition of the work of fifteen young composers hailing from Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Monaco, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom. So it is hoped that it will attract not only professional musicians but also an audience of music lovers interested in discovering the work of the newest generation of electronic composers. The colloquium will also enable each composer to compare his/her music with that of colleagues from other countries and cultural traditions. On both evenings, after performances of their work, the composers will also compare notes in the three following areas. First, the past, present and future of the technology available to produce electronic music. Secondly, training facilities and variations in actual musical practice from country to country. Thirdly, the place of electronic music as a genre on the contemporary musical scene. A well-known musical personality is expected to take part in the discussion on the last point.

Contact: Mr Bruno Bocca, Acousmatica, 44 rue de Tolbiac, 75013 Paris, France. Tel: (33-1) 45-84-07-50.

Publication

La poésie palestinienne contemporaine, poems selected by Abdellatif Laâbi, and published by Messidor, Paris, 1990.

The International Association for the Safeguard and Enhancement of the Palestinian Cultural Heritage has just published an anthology of Palestinian poetry in French. An Arabic version will appear shortly.

Containing the work of thirty-eight poets, most of whom are still living, the book provides an overview of contemporary trends in Palestinian writing, with an introduction by the editor. In each case, the poet's biodata and bibliography precedes a selection of translations of his/her verse. The book is illustrated by original Arab calligraphy by Nja Mahdaoui.

Abdellatif Laâbi has shared with the reader a representative selection of powerful poetic voices, such as those of Mahmoud Darwish, Samih Al-Kassim and Fadwa Toukan, who have given forceful utterance to the vicissitudes of their people. The anthology should reach a wide audience, play an educational role among the Palestinian people and stimulate many new talents.

Contact: The Secretary-General, International Association for the Safeguard and Enhancement of the Palestinian Cultural Heritage, 114 Boulevard Malesherbes, 75017 Paris, France.

FACTS AND FIGURES

What is the Fund: an autonomous entity within Unesco, governed by a Council of fifteen independent personalities appointed in their personal capacities.

Its specificity: direct and flexible contact with institutions, groups and individuals. Sixty percent of its funding has gone to non-governmental projects.

Its resources: donations from governments, public and private institutions and individuals over 5 million US dollars since 1975, plus interest and exchange adjustments of well over 4 million dollars, totalling close to 10 million dollars as of December 1990.

Its project expenditure: over 3 million US dollars on projects in the field. The Fund's backing has stimulated additional support of over 2 million US dollars from other sources.

Its projects: 319 projects in 90 countries since 1977. They range from original creative work in all the arts to the recording, preservation and revival of crafts and oral traditions, research, training and institution-building.

Its cultural products: has helped produce 180 books, booklets, directories and catalogues in 20 languages; 81 films and videos; 54 sound recordings; 15 posters and leaflets.

Its management: the Fund's Council sets policy and awards all grants. It is made up of personalities from all over the world. The Fund's operations are managed by a small staff of three Unesco staff members.

A brochure on the Fund is available. To obtain this brochure or any other information needed contact:

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